

HEADMASTER'S LETTER

14 February 2019



Dear Parent

SPIRIT OF THE SNOW

I hope the winter weather is behind us. Mr Wallace's assembly this week about the 'Spirit of the Snow' which inspires us to help others (ask your sons - it was a super message) by pushing cars, clearing the drives of the elderly, everyone being friendly, etc was particularly apt as I received a number of emails about our boys who were great ambassadors for RGS. I was very pleased to meet Ben Curtis, Louis Gosling, Callum Hughes and Ben Underwood who really did put themselves out to help others on the 'evening of chaos' when High Wycombe was at a standstill. Let's hope that the 'Spirit' does indeed become the 'Spirit of Spring' pretty soon. We did unfortunately lose another Friday, so we will be following a Friday timetable on another day. Details to follow. Boys will be reminded on several occasions and will be expected to use the same part of their memory which never fails to remind them to wear casual clothes on a MUFTI Day!

BAT OAR BALL

This was a fantastic evening, with over 300 guests supporting the huge range of sports at the school. Many thanks to Mr Berryman and Mrs Henry for their stellar organisation of this wonderfully supported annual event. The money raised from the event goes to support all sports at the school.

BEER AND SANDWICHES

I haven't turned into Harold Wilson, entertaining the nation's union leaders, but I was very pleased to welcome Geoff Barton, General Secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, to RGS. The Association has not been particularly helpful to the grammar school sector recently so I took the opportunity to invite Mr Barton to see part of a selective area for himself, visiting both grammar and non-selective schools. He was full of praise for what he saw at RGS, commenting on the relationships, the respect shown by and to the boys and the general ethos of the school, which he sensed strongly. He liked the other schools too!

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER

We are looking for a volunteer to take on the role of 'Responsible Officer'. The role of the RO is to periodically carry out a range of checks on the financial recording, processing and control systems to ensure the application of sound financial management. It is not particularly onerous time wise but it does require a termly visit to the School to meet with finance staff for a couple of hours and to present a report to the Governors Finance Committee once a term. Whilst there are no formal qualifications required, a knowledge of accounting systems and procedures would be of benefit. Please contact my PA dmc@rgshw.com if you are interested and willing to help us.

CCF – A report from Sqn Ldr Matthews

“Congratulations to Cadet Eoin Lacy who scored highest in the Potential Junior NCO cadre which was held on Sunday 10 Feb. 30 boys in Year 11 took part, where their mental agility was tested in theoretical and practical problem-solving problems, together with discussions and presentations culminating in a quick 1.5 mile run. The event both tests and develops leadership skills and all the boys who took part will have learned something about themselves. Well done to all.”

A BIENTOT

We have been very pleased to welcome 18 students from Lycée Victor Hugo, Toulouse. They have been staying with host families here and have undertaken a range of work experience placements. Unfortunately, the waning Bucks Learning Trust saw fit to cease its work experience service without informing its clients until a week or two before the French were due to arrive, so I am very grateful to those who helped place students at short notice. My PA, Mrs Chick, did a great job in avoiding potential chaos! I am very much looking forward to going on the return trip during which our own boys will stay with host families, learn a little about working life in France and hopefully polish their French. Three French students worked in our marketing office and wrote a report for our website.

WEST SIDE STORY

West Side Story is nearly here. It will be an excellent show, superbly acted and directed. Many of you will have seen it on stage, screen or possibly even taken part in it. Tickets will be on public sale shortly. My experience is that the Friday and Saturday night tickets sell quickly, but many often seek tickets once they've heard that the show is not to be missed but it is, alas, sold out. So do consider earlier performances in the run too. You will be aware that even with ticket revenue, school shows are costly to put on (not far off £20,000 in this case). Many of the expenses are defrayed by ticket sales, but if you love shows and feel that you can donate to assist with some of the cost, we have set up a [parent pay link](#) for you to do so and this will reduce the subsidy from the school.

MOCK EXAMS

The great news is that the mock results have been encouraging with some of the key measures being an improvement on last year's very pleasing performance. This means that both Year 11 and Year 13 should be really confident that the hard work of the next twelve weeks will really pay off. RGS is, in my experience, unsurpassed in terms of staff commitment in the build up to public exams with extra classes, revision and mentoring sessions taking place. I would urge all boys to take advantage of these. So often, the most confident students are there with their boots blacked and the missing ones are those that could most readily do with the help. We must all remember, in our push to encourage our sons to achieve the highest grades they can, that their wellbeing is also important so relaxation, sufficient sleep and a healthy diet should be a part of the routine. Please do not hesitate to contact your son's teachers or key staff if you need support or help.

OYEZ

The Chiltern Toastmasters have been working with our Sixth Form Team, Mr Noyes and Mrs Tan, to promote leadership and public speaking. I was very privileged to attend an evening in which fourteen of our Year 12 boys were giving witty, entertaining and informative speeches on everything from sport to politics. The standard was very high with well structured and unscripted talks being given with flair and panache. Parents did not escape and were put on the spot, each of whom delivered a fine oration.

I wish you all a very happy half term break.

Philip Wayne